

The Phasiinae (Dip.: Tachinidae) of Kent - corrigenda and addenda

Since the submission of my earlier paper (*antea*: 27-35) there have been further records of some of the rarer species together with the discovery of one additional species. Two errors have been detected and these are dealt with first.

Cinochira atra Zett. (p. 27). It was wrongly assumed that Yerbury's name *Melanophora atra* pertained to this species. Wainwright, 1928 (The British Tachinidae. *Trans. Ent. soc. Lond.* **76**: 227) stated that *M. atra* is a synonym of *Melanophora roralis* L. Hence the record from Bearsted actually refers to a species of Rhinophoridae.

Litophasia hyalipennis (Fallén) (p. 29). Dr Ismay's record was from Middlesex (Staines Reservoir) and not South Essex.

R.K.A. Morris, 1997 (The status of *Gymnosoma rotundatum* (L.) (Diptera, Tachinidae) in southern England, *Br. J. Ent. Nat. Hist.*, **10**: 12) depicted the recent occurrence of *Gymnosoma rotundatum* (L.) near Dover in East Kent. The origin of this record was based upon an initial misidentification of the 1985 Lydden Hill specimens of *G. nitens* Mg. by myself and it seems that subsequent communications to the relevant interested parties were not heeded.

Catharosia pygmaea (Fallén)

This species was added to the British list by Falk, 1998 (*Catharosia pygmaea* (Fallén) (Diptera: Tachinidae) new to Britain. *Br. J. Ent. nat. hist.*, **11**: 1-5) from a male and female taken in the Lower Stoke area of Coventry on 17 July 1996. On 25 July 1998 I obtained a single male whilst sweeping an open patch of dry, chalk downland at Wrotham Water O.S. grid reference TQ6260. At the spot were numerous, low growing plants of *Crepis capillaris* (L.) Wallr. and it is possible that the specimen was feeding upon the flowers.

Gymnosoma nitens Mg.

A further single male of *Gymnosoma nitens* was taken by general sweeping at Darenth Park TQ569724 on 26 July 1998. The site largely consists of chalk and flint and contains much marjoram *Origanum vulgare* L. This record adds to the association with calcareous soils.

Litophasia hyalipennis (Fallén)

At about 12.30 hrs. on 15 July 1998, a single male was taken by sweeping at East Blean Wood TR193644. This Kent Wildlife Trust managed reserve is typical mixed deciduous woodland, largely chestnut coppice with oak standards, situated on the London Clay. The precise spot was dominated by bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* (L.) Kuhn. and the vast numbers of wood ant *Formica rufa* L. dictated against looking for a possible heteropteran host. The habitat represents a substantial departure from that of the previously recorded sites.

Phasia hemiptera (F.)

On 1 May 1998, Mr Ian Fergusson presented me with a female obtained earlier that day at Keston Common (TQ 4163). The specimen had been beaten from the lower branches of a conifer and represents the earliest recorded date for the species in Kent.

Only three other phasiines were personally recorded by me during 1998. Single males of *Phania funesta* (Mg.) were found at Romney Sands TR 0823, coastal sand dunes, on 17 May and at Wrotham Water Downs TQ 6360, open chalk downland, on 25 July. A single male *Phasia obesa* (F.) was swept on 28 June from an area of calcareous grassland at Bredhurst TQ 79956175 whilst *P. pusilla* Mg. occurred at the same locality and also at Park Gate Down TR 168459 on 7 July.— LAURENCE CLEMONS, 14 St. John's Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4NE.

Synchronised capture of The Vapourer *Orgyia antiqua* L. (Lep.: Lymantriidae) at lights in England and France?

As a day-flying insect, the male Vapourer is rather infrequently captured in nocturnal light traps, and then usually only if physically dislodged from a nearby perch (or perhaps confused by the mv light into thinking it is daylight?). The females are, of course, flightless. I was, therefore, rather surprised to attract seven or eight males to my lights at Tambrum's Farm, near Battlesbridge, South Essex on the night of 2 July 1999. The traps involved were located on, or just behind, the sea-defence wall of the River Crouch which separates the narrow strip of saltmarsh and tidal mud from the adjacent arable desert. I thought little more of this until the following evening, 3rd July, when I received a telephone call from Michael Marney at his home in Graddé, in the Département du Tarn of south-west France. Whilst discussing his previous night's captures he mentioned in passing that he had taken "several" male Vapourer, and that he was equally surprised to see them there. Michael's garden is surrounded by the Grésigne Forest, an ancient oak forest on limestone geology.

The synchronised emergence of insects is a well-known phenomenon, and in itself is not unusual. However, it does seem rather odd that an infrequent visitor to light should suddenly appear, in number, at separate two light traps on the same night, particularly when they are such a great distance apart. It can be clearly stated that at neither site was there agitation of the adjacent vegetation and so in both cases the moths appear to have arrived without artificial stimulation. I would be interested to know if other readers may have had a similar experience on or around the same date. — COLIN W. PLANT, 14 West Road, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3QP.

Least Black Arches *Nola confusalis* (Herrich-Schaffer) (Lep. Nolidae) in Hertfordshire

In May or June 1998, I took a specimen of Least Black Arches *Nola confusalis* at Mardley Heath, Welwyn, Hertfordshire. The county recorder, Colin Plant, confirmed that this was, at that time, a new county record, though since then the presence of the moth since 1987 on the Rothamsted Estate at Harpenden has been published in this journal (Riley, *antea*: 71-94). My specimen was not identified until the end of the season, since it had been overlooked as a "micro" and no capture date was available.